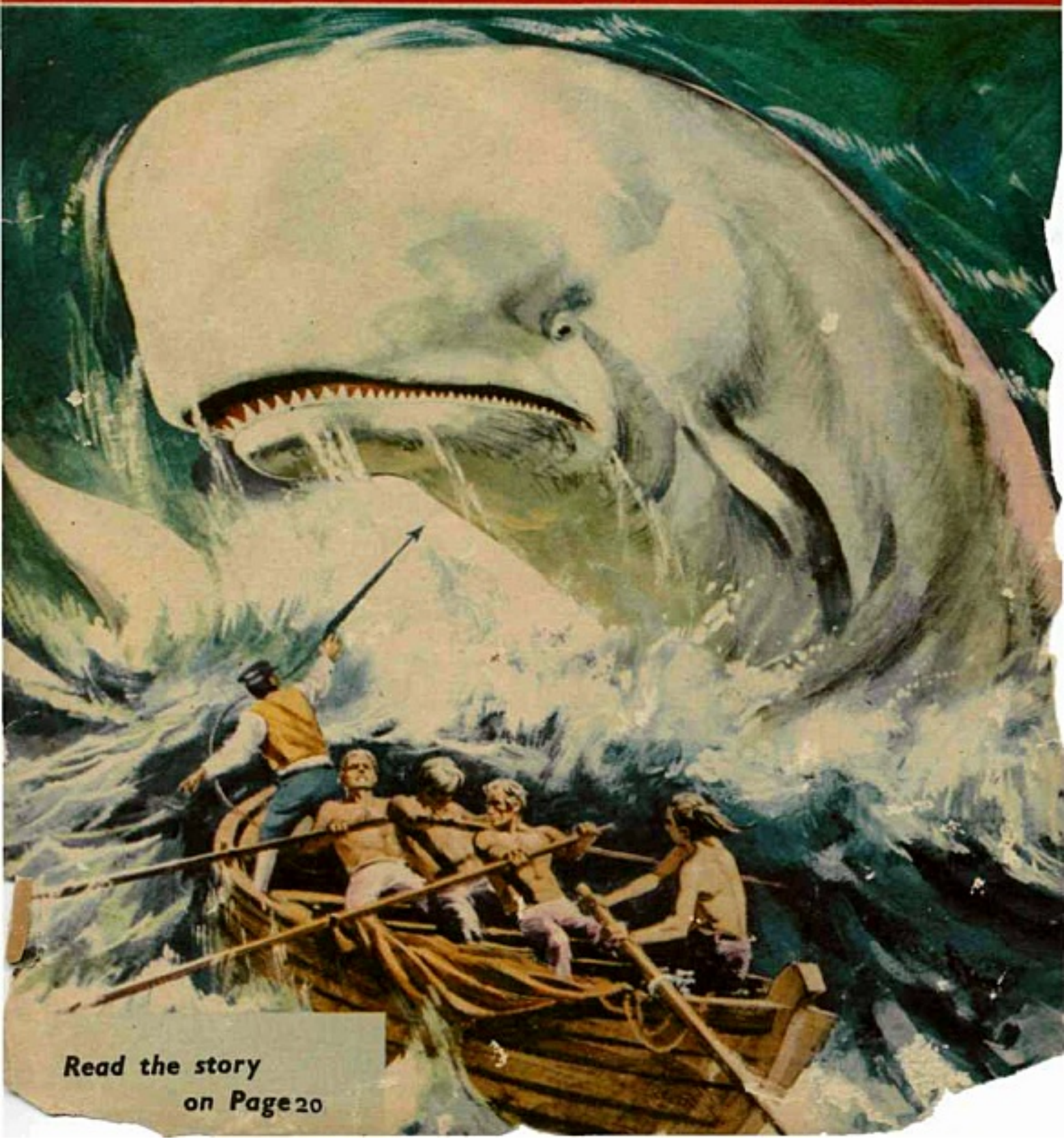


CHANDAMAMA

JANUARY 1973

92 PAISE



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CHANDAMAMA

Vol. 3 No. 7 January 1973

The Wisdom of Truth	6
The Clever Scholar	9
Jack and the Beanstalk	12
Outwitted	17
Our Cover Story	20
Robin Hood	21
Mahabharata	27
The Straw Ox	34
From Rags to Riches	40
Fatty Vinayak	43
Seemanthini	47
The Speaking Grapes	51
The Thief	57
Photo Caption Contest	60
Ulysses goes to War	61

SHORT STORY CONTEST

We certainly received a large number of entries, and as each entry must be considered by a panel of judges, it all takes times. So, it will not be possible to announce the results until the February issue.

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The Wisdom of Truth

The city of Satyapore was ruled by a monarch appropriately named Satyanath because he believed in Truth, above all else. Though he had fabulous wealth, he was kind and charitable and gave freely to all. So his subjects adored him and remained true to his ideals.

This king had a novel idea to banish poverty and penury from his land. Everyday he bought the produce of the land from those who assembled before the palace gates, and had something to sell. This way, the king believed, poverty could be banished and full employment guaranteed to the people. His hopes were not in vain

because even those who had suffered in business sold their goods to him and recouped their losses.

A certain poor brahmin living in a far off village heard about the king's new scheme. He too wanted to sell the king something and get a lot of wealth in exchange. But he was poor and had nothing to sell except his poverty. So he set off for the capital carrying his meagre belongings consisting of a torn waist cloth, a ragged blanket and a tattered bedroll. The palace guards reported to the king that a poor brahmin had come to sell something. The king asked the brahmin what he had to sell. Thereupon the

brahmin said, "Sir, I have come to sell you my poverty. Take it and give me some money."

The king was surprised to hear these words, but he could not change his custom of buying whatever was offered for sale. If he refused to buy what the brahmin had offered for sale, then his word would become false and he would be discredited. So the king said, "Very well, Oh! brahmin, what price do you ask for your poverty?"

"A thousand gold pieces, Sir," said the brahmin.

Without a word, the king received the brahmin's dirty bundle and paid over a thousand gold pieces. The brahmin returned home, happy that at last he was no longer poor.

That night, the king had a strange dream. In it he saw a beautiful damsel leaving his house. So he asked her who she was. She replied, "Oh! King, I am Lakshmi, Goddess of Wealth, I have no more to do here, since you bought poverty. Therefore I am leaving." The king said, "Very well, I can't stop you. You are free to do what you will." So Lakshmi left. Then the



king saw another beautiful maiden following Lakshmi." He asked her who she was and replied, "I am the Goddess of Virtue. After Lakshmi's departure what shall I do here?"

So the king gave her leave to depart. Then the Goddess of Wisdom, and then Fame also left.

At the end, the king perceived a lone Goddess of great lustre following the others. So he stopped her and asked her who she was. She said, "Oh! King,

I am the Goddess of Truth. When all the others are gone, why should I tarry here, alone?

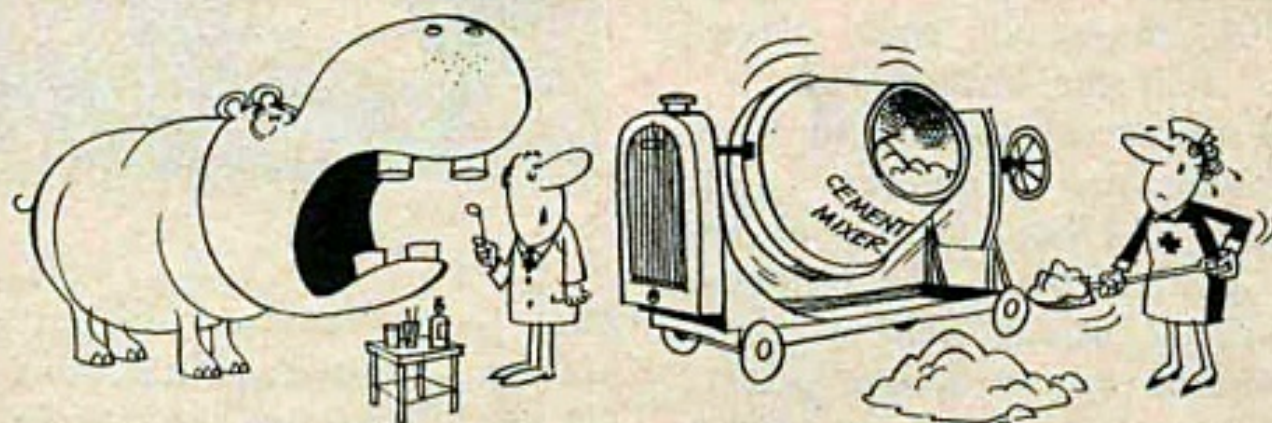
Then the king replied, "I allowed all the others to leave hoping that you alone of all of them will stay in my land. For, I can do without the others, but Truth I must always have."

The Goddess was pleased with his words and elected to stay behind. Then the king saw all the other Goddesses, Wealth, Virtue, Wisdom and Fame turn-

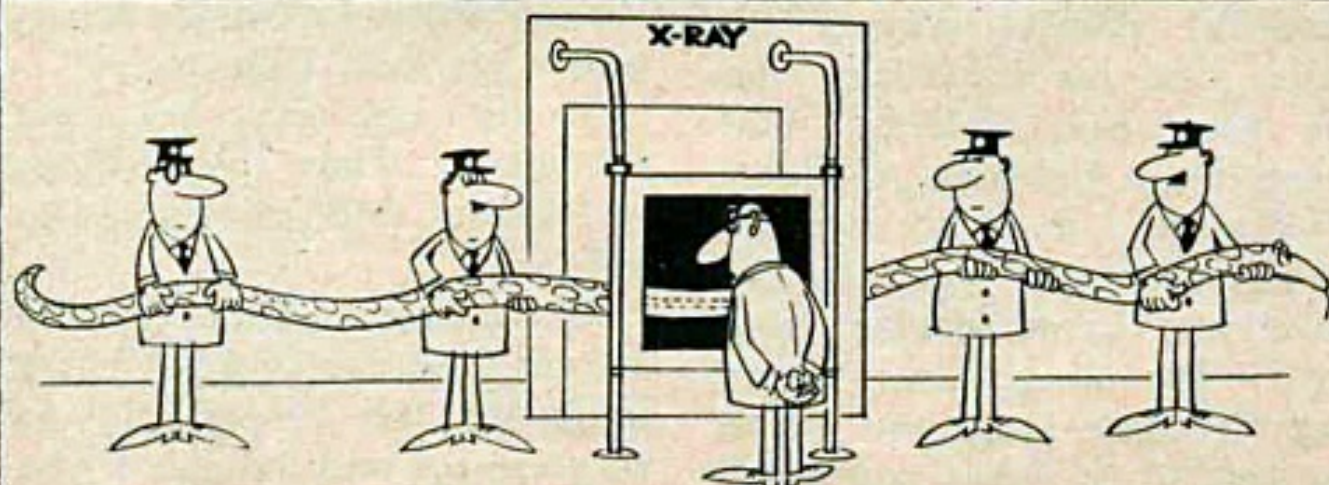
ing back to his kingdom. The king was agreeably surprised and asked them why they had all come back. They proclaimed in unison.

"We thought Truth would accompany us. But she chose to stay with you. Where there is no Truth, we have no business."

The king woke up from his dream and pondered over the vision. Truth, he knew was the most precious possession of mankind.



"Have you finished preparing his tooth filling, nurse?"



"He's all right so far—move him along another yard!"



The Clever Scholar

In the city of Balarampur, there lived a farmer called Walchand. He had two sons, Krishan and Sundar. Krishan looked after the fields and was a farmer like his father. But Sundar was eager to gather knowledge and he went out in search of a good teacher.

He searched far and wide but did not find a suitable teacher. One day, as he was walking down a village street, he swooned in the street because he was worn out by hunger and the strain of walking so far in the hot sun. The house before which he fell belonged to a scholar called Rishikesh who on seeing the state of poor Sundar had him carried inside. Sundar soon recovered and quietly acquainted the

scholar of the reason for his travel. Rishikesh was struck by the keenness of the youth and accepted him as one of his pupils. Sundar stayed there for three years and became well versed in all the branches of knowledge. One day Rishikesh said to him, "Sundar, I've taught you all that I know. Now you have yet to learn only one thing. That you will know from the tribesman who lives in yonder mountains. He will teach you all about stealing, tracking and so on."

Then Sundar bowed before his mentor and went to the tribesman from whom he learnt all about thieving and tracking down thieves. After sometime he became adept at the various arts and bidding good-bye to

his teacher, wended his way home. On the way he stopped to rest before a brahmin's house who invited him to lunch. Here Sundar related all that he had learnt from his teachers. His host looked at him keenly and then said, "Well, you say you've learnt a lot. May I test your knowledge?" Sundar nodded his head in agreement. The brahmin said, "Can you tell me who passed by this house a little while ago?"

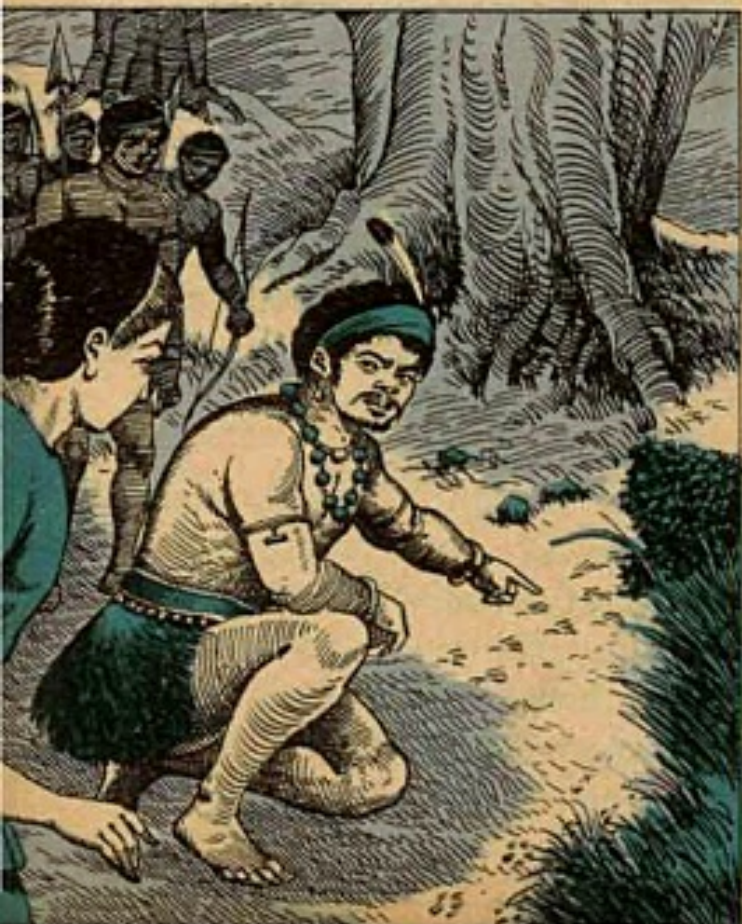
Sundar got up and went into the street. Then he began to track the signs on the street. After a while he came back to the brahmin and said, "I believe about four people passed

by this way a short while ago. They must either be soldiers or Government officials. Before them another man carrying a bag of coal on his head went this way. He seems to have stolen something."

The brahmin was amazed at the knowledge displayed by Sundar. So he said, "True, four soldiers were here a little while ago. The Queen had dropped her ruby necklace near the temple and someone has pinched it. The soliders are hunting for the thief. That is why they were conducting a house to house search. You say that the thief passed before my house. If you can catch the thief, you'll get a fat reward from the king."

Sundar listened to all this very carefully and then went out. He followed the signs on the road and at last came to a goldsmith's house. Then he returned to the brahmin's house and informed the latter that he had found the culprit. The surprised brahmin ran to the soldiers and brought them back. Then he asked Sundar how he had found out the thief.

Sundar replied, "From the four pairs of footprints deeply outlined in the mud, I presumed



that they belonged to wearers of army shoes. Then I saw a solitary pair of footprints just barely visible at the corner of the street ahead. Close to the impression, I saw a few pieces of coal scattered around. I also noticed that these footprints were slightly erased, then reformed again. From this I deduced that whoever went ahead had stopped frequently to look back. Only a man in fear of the soldiers would do that. Besides, an honest man never walks along the edge of the road."

Having said this Sundar led the soldiers straight to the house of the goldsmith. The soldiers were rather doubtful of Sundar's information as they had searched this house earlier on and had found nothing. Sundar went inside and brushing aside the startled goldsmith, uncovered a bag of coal. Along with the pieces of coal, the glittering necklace of the



Queen also popped out. The goldsmith had hidden it in his bag of coal thinking that no one would ever search there. But Sundar proved otherwise by his cleverness.

The king was happy to hear the news of the recovery of the necklace. He rewarded Sundar handsomely and appointed him to his court in a position of responsibility.

■ CHILDREN are a great comfort in your old age—and they help you reach it faster, too.

■ ONE OF THE MANY things nobody ever tells you about middle age is that it's such a nice change from being young.

■ WHEN WE SAY that a man has no sense of humor, what we really mean is that he hasn't the same sense of humor we have.

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awoke, he found to his amazement that a huge beanstalk had grown outside his window. It seemed to stretch up and up and however hard Jack looked he could not see where it went to so he decided to climb to the top. Hand over hand he climbed, getting higher and higher, until at last he found himself at the top and on the edge of a pleasant grassy plain.

Jack walked across the plain until he came to a large stone castle at the top of a hill. By now, he was feeling very hungry so he strode up to the castle door and knocked loudly. The door opened slowly and a woman appeared. "Run for



Hand over hand he climbed, until at last he found himself at the top.

your life, lad," she said. "My husband is a giant and if he has heard your knocking he will come and eat you."

Jack, however, was very hungry so he said, "First give me something to eat, for I have not eaten for a long time."

The giant's wife, warning Jack to be as quiet as he could, led him into the kitchen. There she gave him a large bowl of soup, but he had hardly eaten it when a deep rumbling sound echoed through the castle. It was the footsteps of the giant. Quickly, the woman shut Jack in a cupboard, just as the giant entered the kitchen. He sat down, sniffed for a moment and then said with a voice like thunder, "Fee, fi, fo, fum. I smell the blood of an Englishman."

"I'm sure you can't my dear", said the woman. "It must be the deer that I am roasting for your dinner."

The giant grunted and seemed satisfied and after eating his dinner he ordered his wife to fetch his money bags. When his wife returned the giant started to count his gold, but the dinner had made him sleepy and he soon fell asleep, snoring so loudly that every piece of china in the kitchen rattled.

Jack had watched everything through the cupboard keyhole and now he was sure that the giant was fast asleep, so he crept out of his hiding place. He picked up the money bags from the table and ran out of the castle door, across the plain and down the beanstalk. His mother was overjoyed to see him for she was sure that after her scolding the day before, Jack had run away from home. She was even more pleased when he showed her the bags of gold.

Alas, the day came when nearly all the gold had been spent, then very much against his mother's will, for she was sure Jack would come to some harm, the boy decided to pay the giant another visit. Up and up he climbed until at last he reached the top of the beanstalk and stood once more on the grassy plain.

He knocked on the castle door and again the old woman answered it and told him to go away, but he would not go until she had given him something to eat. Just then, the giant returned to the castle and the giant's wife quickly hid Jack in a basket of linen. The giant's voice rang out, "Fee,



The giant awoke and with a great roar he chased after Jack and his harp.

fi, fo, fum, I smell the blood of an Englishman."

"I'm sure you are mistaken," said the giant's wife. "What you smell is the fine ox I am roasting for your dinner." The giant grunted his approval and sat down to eat his dinner. When he had finished he called to his wife and told her to bring him his fine brown hen.

As Jack peeped out from beneath the linen in the basket



he saw the woman return with a brown hen and as soon as she had set it down on the table it began to lay golden eggs. Soon, the giant fell asleep and Jack slipped out of the linen basket, snatched up the hen and ran out of the castle.

Now Jack and his mother could live in comfort again, but the boy was not satisfied and before long he decided he must pay another visit to the castle, although his mother tried hard to persuade him to stay at home.

Once again he climbed to the very top of the beanstalk and went to the castle on the hill. Just as before the giant came striding into the kitchen while Jack was there and bellowed at the top of his voice, "Fee, fi, fo, fum, I smell the blood of an Englishman." This time Jack was hiding in the oven and the woman assured her husband that what he smelt was the sheep she was roasting for his supper, on a spit in front of the fire.

After dinner, the giant called for his harp and when he had set it down on the table it immediately began to play soft and soothing melodies. These soon sent the giant to sleep and while

his snores rattled all the pots and pans and shook the china. Jack crept out of the oven and lifted the harp off the table.

This time, however, he was in for a surprise. Just as he ran through the kitchen door the harp called out, "Master, master, wake with speed. Save me in my hour of need."

The giant awoke and with a great roar he chased after Jack and his harp. Jack ran as fast as he could and all the time the giant was shouting and bellowing at him to come back. Jack reached the beanstalk and began to climb down, hand over hand. Behind him came the giant.

When Jack reached the ground he rushed into the house for an axe. Then he went back to the beanstalk and with one mighty swipe cut it clean in two, bringing the giant crashing to the ground, where he lay quite dead.

Now that he had cut the beanstalk down, Jack could no longer visit the castle, but he still had the brown hen that laid golden eggs and the harp which played beautiful melodies, so he and his mother were able to live in comfort for the rest of their lives.



OUTWITTED

The land Smallmount was ruled by a King called Chitrasen. Though he was young, he was extremely clever and never took hasty decisions.

Smallmount was bounded on the west by another country called Bigmount. Parakrama, the King of this land had long desired to invade and annex his neighbour's territory. But as long as Chitrasen's father was alive, he could do nothing, so he bided his time. When young Chitrasen became king on the death of his old father, Parakrama revived his designs for the conquest of Smallmount. He thought his task would be easy because Chitrasen was only a stripling with little experience

in waging frontier wars. So he called his ministers together and outlined his plans for the invasion. The ministers fell in with his proposal, but first wanted to test the young king's mettle. It was wise to know the enemy before engaging him in battle. The king thought this a good idea and a letter was drafted to be sent to Chitrasen. The king and the ministers thought they would find out all about Chitrasen's courage and wisdom from his reply to their letter.

In due course, Chitrasen received his powerful neighbour's missive which instructed him to send, 'Some intelligence to the land of Bigmount or



else! The young king and his ministers were not a little astonished at the strange request. The ministers realized that the request was no ordinary one but that some sinister motive lay behind it. Chitrasen was baffled to the extreme. Just then Madiyugi, a minister in the court stood up and said, "Sire, give me but three months time and I shall solve the riddle of this letter."

Chitrasen assented and wrote back to Parakrama that he would send what was requested

in three months.

Three months were nearly over and a day remained to complete the period.

Madiyugi came to the palace bearing a large sack on his shoulders and said to the king, "Sire, the intelligence that Parakrama wanted is right here, inside this sack. Let us send it to him at once."

Everyone wondered what was in the sack, but no one dared ask. Even the king was silent. Then the sack was sent off to Bigmount.

Parakrama was surprised to receive the sack and in the assembled court, ordered that it be opened. When the sack was opened, they found a small-necked mud jar. Inside the jar was a big water melon which hugged the sides tightly. The tendril of the melon sprouted through the narrow mouth and swung to the ground.

The jar was new and smooth and round all over. Not a crack anywhere! Inside, the king found a letter which the chief minister read out loudly.

"As requested by King Parakrama, we have enclosed 'intelligence' inside this jar. Please take out the melon without breaking the vessel."

The king finished reading this and looked around at his courtiers. They pondered over the riddle of the melon inside the jar and wondered how anyone could have placed it there. Intelligence could be had only when they took the melon out of the jar without damaging the latter.

As no suggestions were forthcoming, Parakrama turned to his ministers and said, "It seems that Chitrasen is not as foolish as we thought. We must be careful in dealing with him."

Then Parakrama wrote back to Chitrasen. "Thank you for your thoughtful gift. I shall always treasure your friendship more than anything else."

Chitrasen was delighted to receive such a nice letter from his formidable neighbour. Then he called Madiyugi and said, "Oh! Madiyugi! The intelli-

gence you send Parakrama has saved us from an invasion. Tell me now, what did you send him to change him so?"

Madiyugi bowed low before the king and said, "Your Majesty! I sent very ordinary things. Four months ago, I grew some water melons. When the tree began to yield fruit, I fed one bud into an earthen vessel. The fruit began to grow inside the jar and filled it up. Then I cut off the tendril, closed the mouth and sent it to Parakrama with the message that 'intelligence' was inside the vessel and it was up to him to take it out without breaking the jar."

King Chitrasen laughed at the cleverness of his minister who had outwitted King Parakrama of Bigmount and had saved Smallmount from disaster.



THE STORY OF THE COVER

THE DEATH OF MOBY DICK



THAR SHE BLOWS! This was the familiar cry that would ring out from the look-out man aboard the whaling ships of old. And that was the cry which Captain Ahab gave as he pointed a trembling finger from the mast of his ship, the *Pequod*. Excited deck hands followed the direction of their captain's finger and saw Moby Dick, the dreaded killer whale, blowing defiance at them. The challenge was accepted and a boat was lowered, with the one-legged Captain Ahab in command. Only one man survived the terrible fight with the whale, which also died. "Moby Dick" is a story well worth reading.

CAN FISH SEE COLOURS?

There are many thousands of different kinds of fish in the seas and rivers of the world and nobody knows if they are all colour blind. Perhaps many fish, like animals, see things in a sort of mono colour, others may be able to see some colours but not all. However, scientists are constantly experimenting in this matter.



News had reached Robin Hood that the Norman Baron known as Robert the Wolf was planning to send his finest soldiers into Sherwood Forest to capture all the outlaws. The danger was very clear to all of them.

"Shall we leave Sherwood and hide somewhere else?" some of them asked. Robin shook his head and smiled. "We know the forest better than they do," he answered "Let us prepare our defences, then they will be sorry they came here." Robin made his plans and kept his men busy.





Meanwhile, Robert the Wolf went to London to tell Prince John all that was going on in Nottingham, and how he planned to capture Robin Hood and all his men. He hoped to please the Prince and so win power for himself!

Prince John was ruling England while King Richard was in Palestine. He hoped to seize the throne for himself and wanted wicked and ruthless men like Robert the Wolf to help him. "Send the Baron to me!" he told his servant.

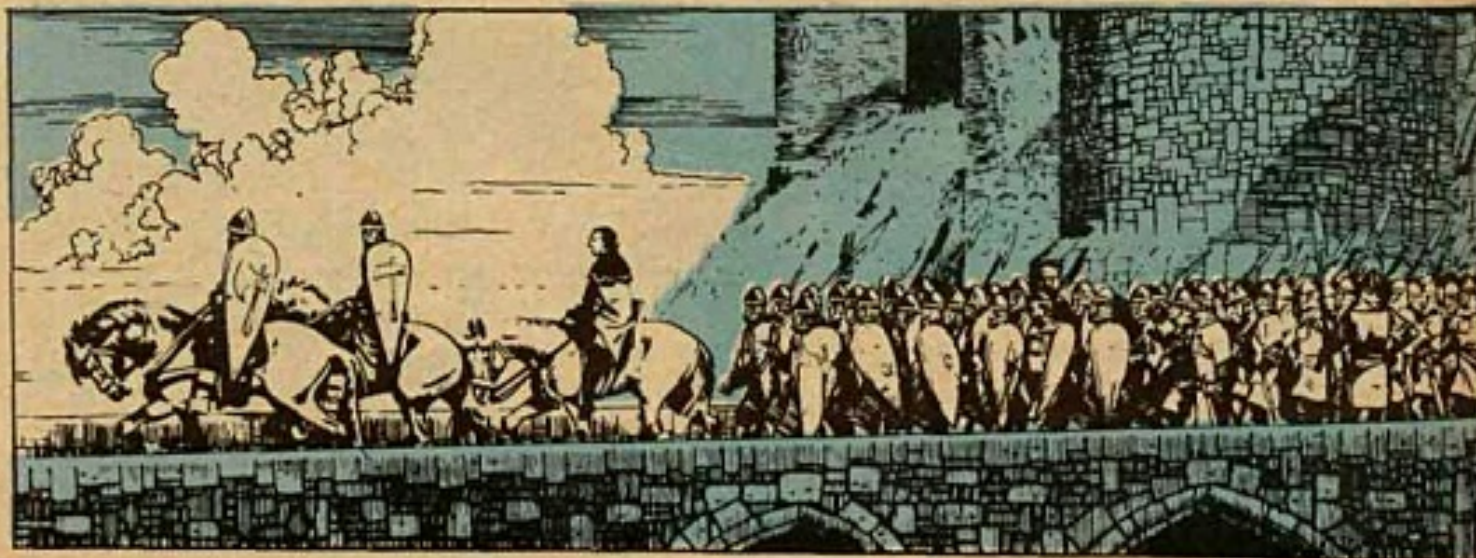


"Your Royal Highness," said Robert the Wolf, "King Richard is abroad and does not care about England. Now is the time to declare yourself king, no one can prevent you." "Not even Robin Hood?" asked the Prince timidly.

Robert the Wolf was angry at the Prince's words. "You need not worry about Robin Hood," he declared. "I am sending all my soldiers into Sherwood Forest to put an end to those outlaws." "Very well, Baron," said the Prince. "When you have succeeded, come and report to me."



Robert the Wolf was in a bad temper when he left Prince John, yet he knew that Robin Hood could stop anyone stealing the throne. Back in Nottingham, Robert the Wolf got busy. He put his soldiers under the orders of two Norman knights, Sir Guy and Sir Stephen, and he made the wily Sheriff go with them.





Robin Hood, however, had been told that they were coming. Both the Norman knights were uneasy about going into the forest. "I would much rather fight them out in the open, where I can see them," said Sir Stephen to Sir Guy.



When they entered the forest, the Norman soldiers looked around nervously. They realised, that Robin Hood's men could ambush them easily. The Sheriff of Nottingham was very nervous and kept glancing at the dense trees and undergrowth, but saw nothing.



One of Robin's men, who was watching the Normans from his perch in a tree-top, reckoned it was time for Robin to be told that his enemies were close at hand. He blew his warning horn, and the notes rang through the forest.



The watcher up in the tree, with his warning horn, had ruined all chances of surprising Robin Hood. Sir Stephen was furious as he shouted orders to his bowmen: "Shoot your arrows straight up into the tree." The men obeyed.

The arrows whistled up through the foliage in a swarm. The brave outlaw dodged them as best he could, but in so doing he lost his grip on the tree, and fell helplessly to the ground. He was knocked out and lay quite still.





The Normans ran to him and thought he was dead. "He was a brave man," they said, "but he won't blow his horn any more." They were quite wrong, of course. They left him lying there and marched on further into the forest.

They knew by now that they could not hope to take Robin Hood and his men by surprise. The sound of that one horn had been heard by other watchers who sounded their horns and so passed on the alarm to Robin in his secret camp.



The Normans hearing the horns resounding through the forest, were scared. Meanwhile, Robin heard the warning notes of the horns and summoned his men to his side. "Right, lads," he said firmly. "You all know the plans. Now, we must fight for all we hold dear. Come on. Follow me!"

ANOTHER EXCITING EPISODE IN NEXT ISSUE



MAHABHARATA

The story so far.....

Having passed twelve years of exile in the forests, the Pandava princes disguised themselves and entered into menial service of Virata, King of the Matsyas, to pass their year of concealment.

The Pandava Princes safely pass through this year of concealment in spite of Duryodhana's efforts to find them. At last an incident happened which led to their discovery. Susarma, King of the Trigartas and Duryodhana combine their forces in order to invade Matsya and drive off the herds of cattle for

which the kingdom was famed. King Virata leads his army against Susarma, and it falls on his son, Prince Uttara, to fight the Kuru army, led by Duryodhana. But Prince Uttara has no heart for warfare, and in the end, Arjuna in the guise of Brihannala, acts as Uttara's charioteer, and attacks the Kuru army.

Drona hears the sound of Arjuna's conch and advises Duryodhana to take part of the army and flee to Hastinapura. Arjuna gives chase to his bitter foe.

The Kauravas tried to foil Arjuna's attempt to pursue the



Arjuna diverts his chariot towards Kripacharya

fleeing Duryodhana. They, attacked him fiercely and he turned his attention towards them.

With Uttara skillfully driving the chariot, Arjuna launched a blistering attack on Karna who tried in vain to stem the sweeping tide of arrows. Soon the latter had to retreat. The Kauravas now banded together under the generalship of Kripacharya and swept towards Arjuna, but the Pandava warrior after a furious onslaught routed them completely. Kripacharya also fell back.

Then it was Drona's turn to attack Arjuna. For a brief

second Arjuna paused in his attack because he did want to wound his former teacher. Drona, noticing his hesitation quickly notched an arrow and sent it across. Recovering himself, Arjuna blocked the arrow with a barb of his own and soon rained a shower of arrows on Drona who unable to stand up to the fusillade fell back.

Aswathama, came to aid his father but was ultimately defeated. Then Dushasana and Karna returned to the fray, but once again they fell back against the pointed attack of Arjuna. Then Bhishma drove up in his chariot and a veritable battle royal ensued between the two. Thick and fast flew the arrows until at last, bleeding and unconscious, Bhishma slumped in his chariot.

In the meanwhile Duryodhana had turned back and seeing the plight of Bhishma, charged at Arjuna. Again the mighty bow twanged and a steel tipped arrow pierced the breast plate of Duryodhana. Frightened by this close brush with death, Duryodhana turned his chariot round and drove away madly from the battlefield. At this Arjuna laughed mockingly. Stung by his mocking laughter,

Duryodhana again flung himself into the battle and the other Kauravas renewed their attack on Arjuna. Finally, Arjuna fitted a barb known as Samno-kastra to his bow and shot it at his enemies. The arrow struck the Kaurava host like a bolt of lightning and they fell to the ground senseless. Arjuna turned to Uttara and said, "Oh! Prince, go and collect their silken sashes and helmets. Have you forgotten your boast to the ladies of the boudoir that you will bring back the clothes of the Kauravas to adorn the statues at home? Take the sashes and helmets of Karna, Duryodhana, Aswathama and the others, but do not touch that grand old man, Bhishma."

Uttara did as he was bid and came back with the head-gear and sashes of the Kaurava leaders. At that moment, Bhishma lifted his head and saw what was happening. He propped himself up and resumed the battle with Arjuna. But the Pandava bowman killed his horses and set him afoot.

When Duryodhana recovered from his faint, he saw the chariot of Arjuna speeding away "Don't let him escape, block the chariot," he shouted at his

soldiers.

Then Bhishma said, "You fought against him for a long while. Why didn't you capture him then? When we were in that dead faint he could have killed us all easily. He merely took away your helmets and sashes. Admit you are defeated and let him drive away the flocks of sheep and cattle."

Reluctantly the Kauravas admitted their defeat at the hands of Arjuna and began to retrace their steps. The Pandava warrior in passing shot two more arrows which fell at the feet of Drona and Bhishma to mark his respect to them. Yet another



Arjuna taunts Duryodhana for cowardice



The news of victory is brought to King Virata

shaft from Arjuna's bow split Duryodhana's crown into two. Then Arjuna turned to Uttara and said, "Our work is done. We have got back our flocks, and the enemies are on the run. Now let's go back to the palace but first we must hide these weapons in the tree."

Uttara hid the weapons in a hole in the tree and came back. Arjuna once again took

the reins of the chariot and then turned to Uttara and said, "Don't tell your father about the Pandavas. Make him think that you defeated the enemies single handed."

But Uttara protested against this. "No, sir, I can't do that," he said, "I will speak the truth. For now, I'll do as you tell me. Let me pass on the news of the victory to the palace, and then we can go in."

The glad news was sent ahead and Uttara and Arjuna followed in its wake. Meanwhile King Virata after defeating Susarna was back in the palace. He sent for his son Uttara and was told that the latter had gone to the battlefield in a chariot driven by Brahannala, the danseuse.

Hearing this the king felt worried. "How can my timid son hope to overcome the mighty Kauravas?" he wondered aloud. But Yudhishtira consoled him. "Don't worry, Sire," he said, "As long as Brahannala is with him, he will certainly return victorious."

Then some soldiers brought the glad tidings of Uttara's victory over the Kauravas. Yudhishtira turned to the king and said, "What did I tell

you, Sire? I was right. As long as Brahannala is with him, victory will always be his. There can be no doubt about that."

Virata felt a surge of annoyance at these words. A mere danseuse responsible for his son's victory. Impossible!

However, he stifled his anger and ordered the city to be gaily decorated to mark his son's grand achievement. Then he invited Yudhishtira to throw dice with him. The two began to roll the dice. Then the king addressed Yudhishtira, "Have you noticed how brave my son is? He has defeated even the mighty heroes of the Kauravas!"

Yudhishtira intent on the dice replied calmly, "I told you once before, Sire. As long as Brahannala drives his chariot, victory will always be his."

Now at these words, Virata's anger rose uncontrollably. "Listen, you stupid old fellow," he shouted at Yudhishtira, "Every time I speak of my son's victory. You insist that Brahannala was the cause. If you repeat that again, I'll not be responsible for what happens. But Yudhishtira

clicking the dice replied absent mindedly, "Even the gods cannot win over Bhishma, Drona, Kripa and Karna. But Brahannala can defeat them. She has that power. Therefore, I am not surprised that your son won."

At these words, tossed so carelessly by Yudhishtira rage blinded the eyes of King Virata. Quick as thought he picked up the heavy dice and flung them at Yudhishtira with all his strength. They struck Yudhishtira's face with a thwack and blood began to dribble from his nose. Draupadi seeing this, ran to his side and





hold a golden chalice under his beard so that the blood may not spill on the ground.

A messenger ran in to tell the king of the arrival of Uttara and Brahannala. "Send them in," said the happy king. Yudhishtira stopped the

messenger and said, "Send only Uttara. Let Brahannala go to her chamber. If she saw my bleeding face, your king's life would be in danger."

A little later, Uttara came in and bowed before his father. When he raised his head, he

saw the wound on Yudhishthira's face and asked in an anguished voice, "Who has done this foul deed?"

King Virata replied, "I hit him with the dice. Each time, I praised your victory, he would say it was all due to Brahanala. I got angry and flung the dice at him."

Uttara became highly agitated at these words. He cried out, "Oh! Father what have you done? You have insulted a venerable old brahmin. Apologise to him for your conduct."

King Virata, sensing that something was wrong begged Yudhishthira to forgive him.

Yudhishthira replied, "Sire, I am not angry with you. Should even a drop of my blood fall on the ground, great harm will come to your land. I was only worried about that." By

now, the bleeding from his nose had stopped.

Then Uttara ushered Brahanala into his father's presence. Virata looked at her and said loudly, "Uttara, you are truly a brave son, worthy of me. Who can match your courage and skill? But tell me, how did you defeat Karna, Bhishma, Drona and Aswathama? Even the mighty Duryodhana, a peerless warrior was defeated by you! What a magnificent victory that was."

But Uttara replied solemnly, "Father, you misunderstand. I had nothing to do with my victory over the Kauravas. A god came to my rescue. When I was running away from the battle-field, this god stopped me, asked me to be his charioteer, and with his skill and bravery, routed the enemies completely."



THE STRAW OX

Once upon a time, there lived an old man and old woman. They were so poor that they had barely enough money to keep them alive. The old man worked as a pitch burner and the old woman spun flax into thread, but however hard they worked, they never seemed to have any money to spare.

One day, the old lady said to her husband, "Make me a straw ox and then cover it with pitch."

The old man thought this was a very strange idea which his wife had got into her head. "What do you want a straw ox for?" he asked. "It is of no use to anyone."

"Just do as I say and you will see," replied the old woman mysteriously.

Grumbling and muttering to himself, the old man went off and set to work. When he had finished, he had made a very strange-looking beast, indeed. It was straw inside and covered with pitch outside.

Next morning, the old woman took her strange ox out to the field. Then she sat down behind a hillock, to watch what happened. As she sat there, she worked at her spinning, but the sun was hot and the day was pleasant and in no time at all, the old woman had dozed off.

Then, out of the dark woods nearby, came a big, brown bear. The bear stopped when he saw the straw ox. He walked all the way round the ox and then said, "Who are you? Speak and tell me."

"I am a three year old ox and I am made of straw and smeared all over with tar," replied the ox.

"Aha," said the bear. "I could just do with some of that straw and tar to patch up my ragged fur, which has been caught and torn on brambles and thorns."

"Certainly," said the ox. "Take some straw and tar from me." The bear reached out a



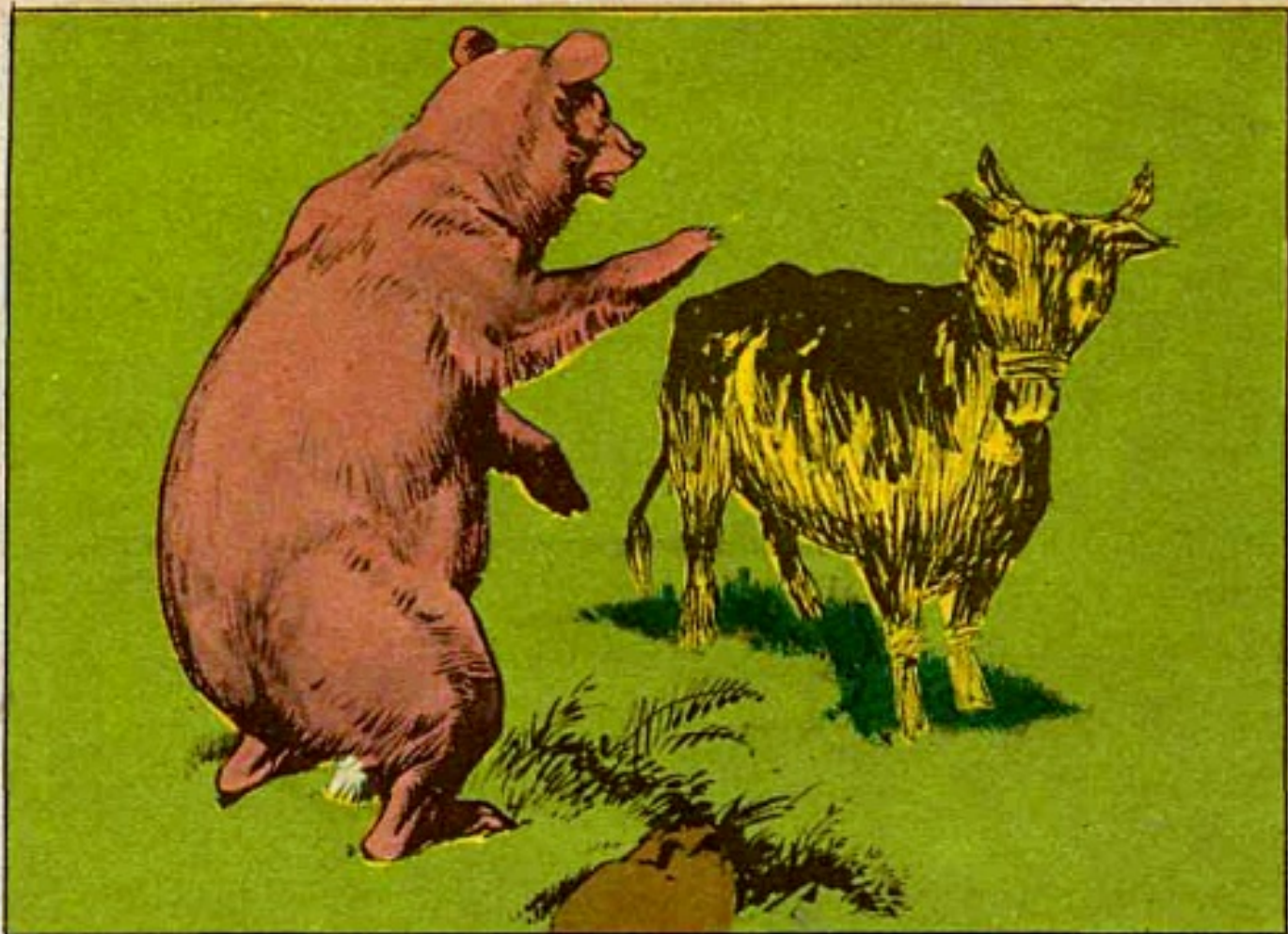
The old lady said to her husband, "Make me a straw ox and cover it with pitch."

paw to take some tar, but the minute his paw touched the ox, it stuck fast to the tar. The more the bear tugged, the harder it stuck. He put out his other paw to help, but that stuck, too. Then the ox dragged him back to the house.

After a time, the old woman woke up and looked around. There was no sign of the ox

anywhere, so she hurried home. There she found her ox, with a bear stuck to it. At once she called out to her husband, "Come quickly, the ox has caught a bear."

The old man ran out and there he saw the bear. It had pulled itself free from the ox, only to find that its front paws, covered in tar, had stuck to



the side of the little wooden cottage. The old man pulled the bear away from the wall, tied it up and threw it into the cellar.

Next morning, the old woman set off into the field again, with her straw ox and her spinning. Again the day was hot and she dozed. This time, a wolf came running out of the forest and he, too, stopped to look at the ox.

"Who are you? Tell me," growled the wolf.

"I am a three year old ox," it replied. "I am stuffed with straw and covered with tar."

"Covered with tar are you?" said the wolf. "In that case give me some of your tar, so that when the dogs chase me their teeth and claws will not rip my sides."

"Help yourself," replied the straw ox, so the wolf reached out his paw to take a large lump of tar, but he, too, stuck fast to the side of the ox and was dragged back to the house.

When the old woman awoke, the ox had gone, so she rushed back to the house and there it was, the wolf stuck firmly to its sides. She called her husband and the astonished man

pulled the wolf free, tied it up and threw it into the cellar, with the bear.

Next day, the ox caught a fox in the same way as before and the day after that, it caught a hare. They joined the bear and the wolf in the cellar.

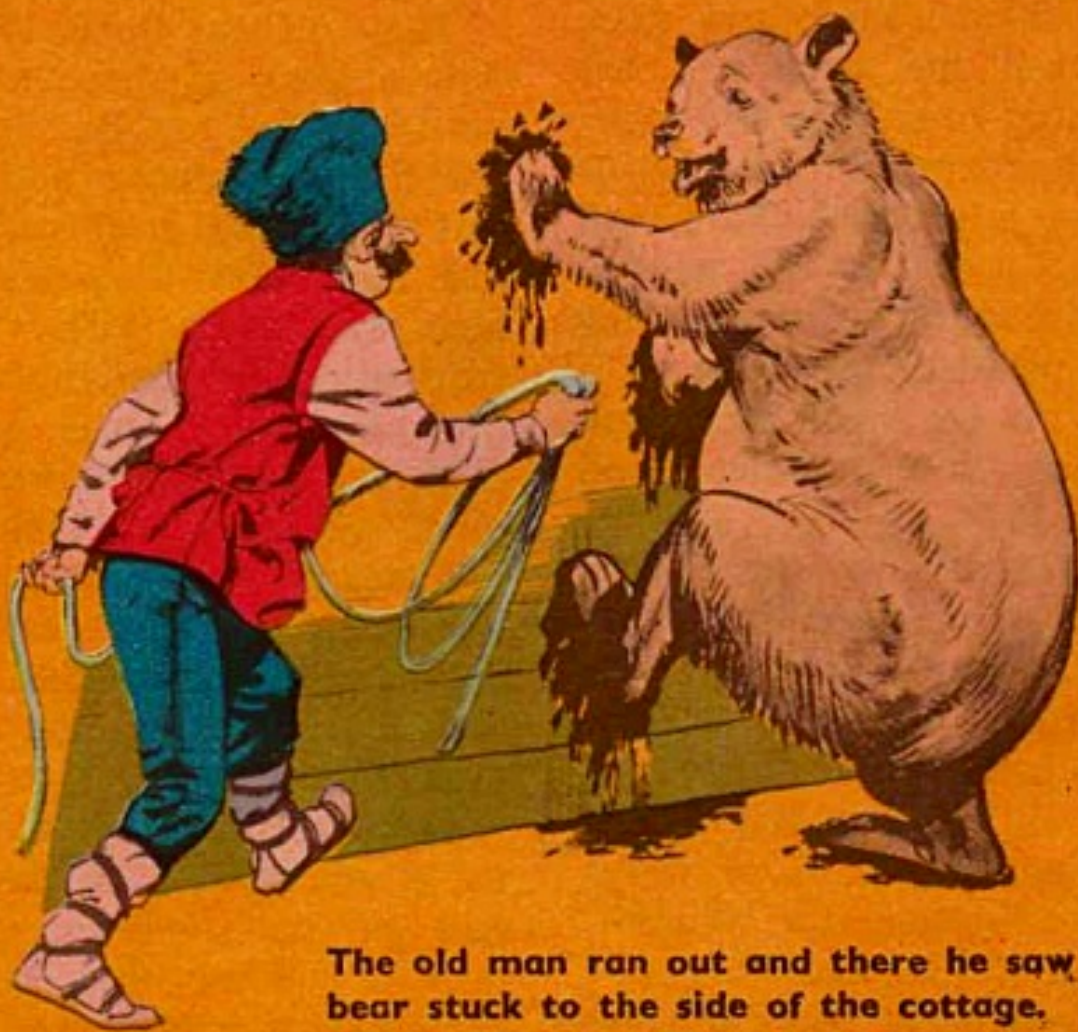
That night, the old man went down to the cellar, carrying a large knife. He sat down and began to sharpen the knife.

"Tell me, old man," said the bear. "Why are you sharpening that knife?"

"I shall kill you and take off your skin, for it will make me a fine fur coat," replied the old man.

"Oh, please don't kill me," implored the bear. "If you let me go, I will bring you a lot of honey. It will taste delicious on your bread and it will sweeten your drinks."

The old man let the bear go in return for his promise of the honey. Then he sat down and continued to sharpen his knife.



The old man ran out and there he saw the bear stuck to the side of the cottage.

"What are you sharpening your knife for, old man?" asked the wolf.

"I shall kill you and take off your skin to make me a fine fur cap for Winter," replied the old man.

The wolf trembled with fear. "Do not kill me, old man," he said. "If you let me go, it will be worth your while, for I will bring you a whole herd of sheep"

The old man was pleased with this, so he let the wolf go free. Next it was the turn of the fox. He put out his little snout and said, "Dear, kind, old man, please tell me why you are sharpening your knife so busily"

"Little foxes have nice skins that make pretty collars and scarves," said the old man.

"Please don't take away my skin," pleaded the fox. "If you let me go, I will bring you in return, fine, fat hens and ducks."

The old man let the fox go and now only the hare remained, trembling in the corner. "Do not sharpen your knife for me," said the little hare.

"But little hares have nice, soft skins, which make warm gloves and mittens for Winter", replied the old man.

"I could bring you cabbages

and cauliflowers and nice, juicy vegetables for your cooking pot," said the hare.

The old man let the hare go, too, and then he went upstairs to where his wife was waiting and they both went to bed.

Next morning, just before dawn, the two old people were awakened by a scratching and snuffling at the door. When they opened it and went outside, there stood the bear. In its paws it carried a pot of honey, which it gave to the old man and then went scampering off.

The wolf was there, too, driving a flock of sheep into the yard and the fox had brought the fine, fat ducks and hens, just as he had promised. The old man shut the sheep and hens and ducks safely in the yard and then he noticed the little hare. It had brought cabbages and cauliflowers and plenty of other vegetables.

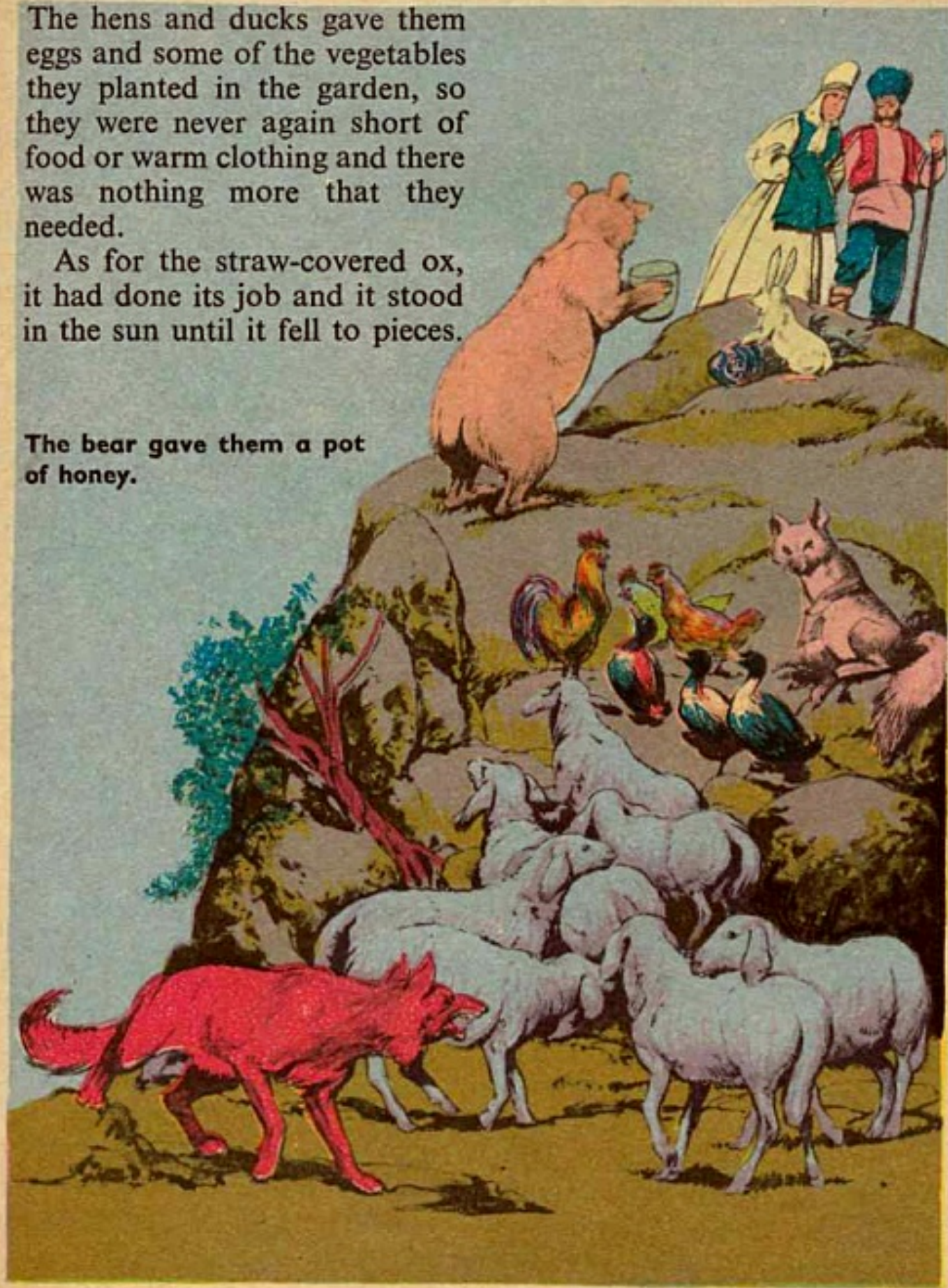
The old man and his wife rejoiced at the wonderful things they had, for now they could live in comfort for the rest of their lives.

Some of the sheep they sold for a good price, so that they had as much money as they needed. Some they kept, so that they had meat and wool.

The hens and ducks gave them eggs and some of the vegetables they planted in the garden, so they were never again short of food or warm clothing and there was nothing more that they needed.

As for the straw-covered ox, it had done its job and it stood in the sun until it fell to pieces.

The bear gave them a pot of honey.





From Rags to Riches

In a certain city there lived a peasant called Ratan. He worked for a local landlord who had very kindly provided him a small hut close to the cattle watershed. There he lived and provided for his family with the pittance he received from the landlord.

One day Ratan told his wife, "Look here, I try hard enough, but I never seem to be able to save even ten paise. If only

I had ten paise, then I'll increase it to a thousand rupees."

Just then the landlord was passing by and heard the boast of Ratan. He decided to test Ratan's boast, so quietly, he dropped a ten paise bit near the trough and walked off. Next morning while sweeping the ground near the trough Ratan's wife found the coin and carried it triumphantly to her husband.

"Here you are," She said.

"The ten paise you're going to turn into a thousand rupees. Pray, how will you do it?" Ratan quickly pocketed the coin and said simply, "Wait and see." Then he went to his master and said, "Sir, here is the ten paise bit you must have dropped near the water trough yesterday."

However the landlord returned it to Ratan saying that it was not his and surely belonged to the latter.

Then Ratan went to a pawn shop and told the broker, "Give me a loan of a Rupee. As interest, I'll give you a ten paise. In the evening I shall

return the capital." The pawn broker gave him a rupee and took the ten paise. Then Ratan went to another pawn broker and giving him the rupee, borrowed ten rupees. These ten rupees were exchanged for hundred rupees at another shop. To all of them, he promised to return the capital by the evening.

Then again he hastened to yet another loan shop and said to the broker, "I have measured out all my grain and will receive the money for it only next week. So please give me a thousand rupees and take these hundred rupees as interest."





Now the broker knew who Ratan was, having seen him often in the company of the landlord. So without a word he counted out the thousand rupees in return for the hundred he received as interest.

Ratan in turn visited all the shops he had borrowed from and by nightfall had settled all his smaller debts. That night he showed his money to his wife and said, "Here, see all this money! all due to my cleverness." Then he related how he had come by the amount.

Next day morning he went to a nearby village which was famous for the quality of its corn. During harvest time, many businessmen would crowd the village market and compete with one another in buying up all the corn. When Ratan arrived, the crops had been

harvested and the grains were ready to be sold. He went from farmer to farmer and said he would buy up all the corn, and to back up his words, paid each one substantial amounts as advance. The news of this bargain spread all over the village and eventually reached the ears of the regular buyers who had come to the village to buy the corn.

They all flocked to Ratan and after a great deal of bargaining bought all his corn at double the price he had already paid. Thus Ratan made a clean profit of a thousand rupees.

The following day, he cleared his debts and with the balance of money, bought himself a small plot of land suitable for cultivation. He began to till the land himself and soon became as prosperous as his previous master.



FATTY VINAYAK

Fatty Vinayak was lying in the sun when his master Damodar, spotted him. Now Damodar was a rich man of the village and rode a lovely white horse. That day, he had a jar of oil too big to carry on his horse. So asking Fatty to take it home, he cantered off.

Fatty loped along behind the steed. He could not take his eyes off the horse. What a splendid animal, he thought. How beautifully it canters! Oh!, wouldn't it be fun to ride a horse just like that!

So he asked his master how much the horse cost. Damodar replied seriously that he had got it for five hundred rupees.

If Fatty Vinayak had that amount of money on him, he would sell the horse to him.

Fatty began to chew over this. He thought, "Ah! My master will pay me twenty-five paise for carrying this jar. Then I'll buy two eggs. Out of these eggs I'll get a cock and a hen. When the hen lays eggs, I'll get more hens and therefore more eggs. More eggs mean hens, and more hens mean more eggs. So, I'll have lots of eggs to sell and I'll sell them all for a hundred rupees!" Then I'll buy sheep for this money and soon there'll be a flock of sheep. I'll sell the flocks for five hundred rupees



and buy that lovely white horse. Then I'll gallop like the wind."

Lost in his day dream, Fatty held out his hands and flicked his wrists to imitate a horseman holding the reins. The jar slipped from his fingers and crashed on the ground with a big noise and all the oil dribbled out.

Damodar stopped his horse on hearing the crash. Hastily Fatty explained that it wasn't his fault at all. Thinking about the horse had brought it on. Then he related his day dream. Damodar became furious and said, "That jar of oil cost me ten rupees. You'll work for

me without pay until you repay me ten rupees worth of service."

Fatty Vinayak meekly picked up the empty jar and followed his master home. Damodar has a dog which suffered from an open sore. All day long flies buzzed around it. Fatty was ordered to put some salve on the wound and drive off the flies.

So Fatty swished his stick around, and yelping with fear, the dog scuttled away with the bumbling boy in pursuit. Soon the street mongrels joined in and all ran a merry race, far beyond the village. In the resulting confusion, Damodar's dog slipped away and doubled back to the house. Unaware of this, Fatty Vinayak ran on and getting very angry at not finding his master's dog banged his stick on the head of a white mongrel which fell down senseless. Then he stuffed the still living dog in a bag and went to his master. But on the way, the white mongrel suffocated to death.

Damodar was surprised to see the dead dog and did not know what to make of Fatty's foolishness. So he said, "Look here, you idiot, this is not my dog. This is somebody else's

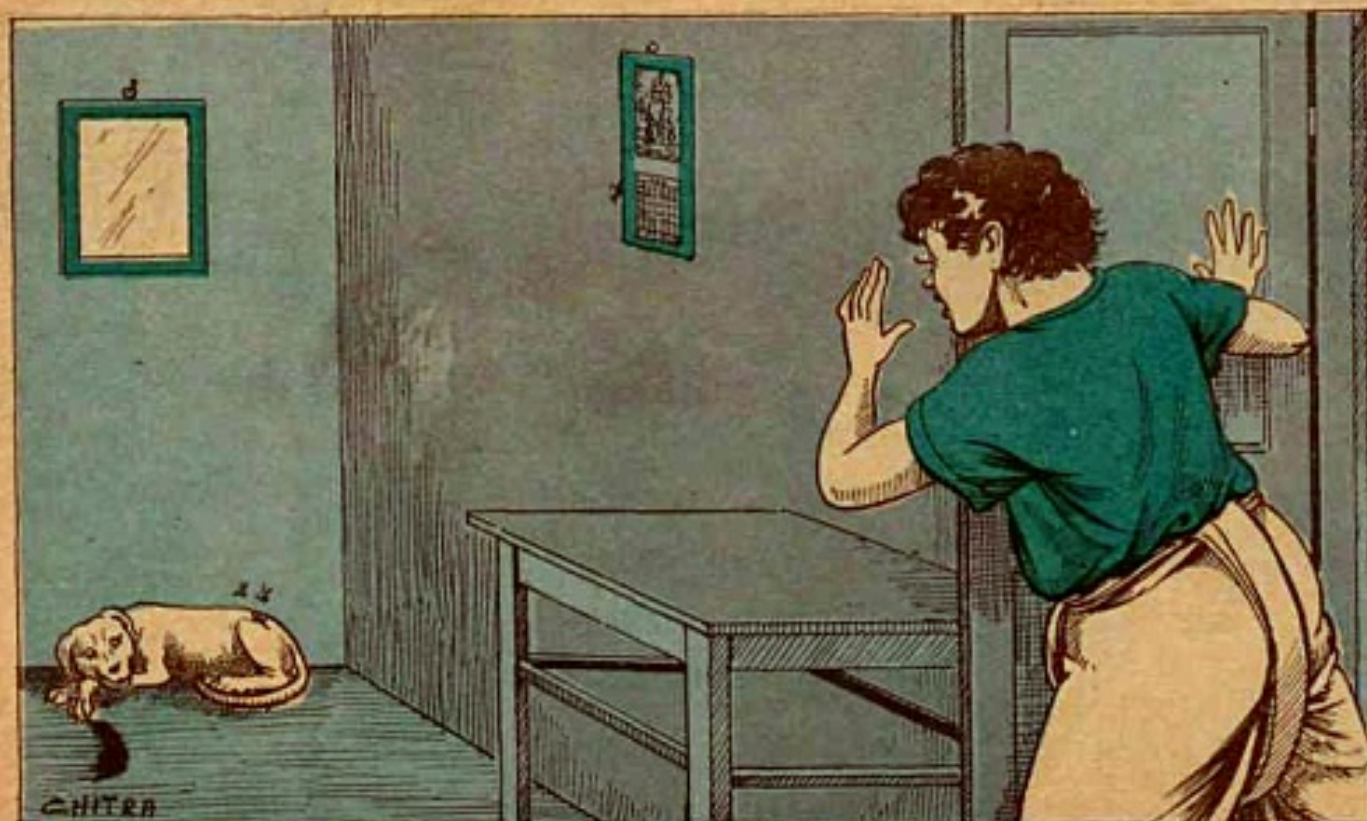
and its dead alright. We must bury it secretly. I'll go off and dig a hole in the garden to bury it. Wrap this dog up in a blanket and bring it to me."

Vinayak wrapped up the dead animal in a blanket and took it to the garden. But when he unrolled the blanket, there was no dog in it, for the simple reason that it had fallen out on the way. His master scolded him and said, "You fat fool, the dog must have dropped on the road, Go, find it."

Fatty Vinayak searched for the dead dog high and low but without any luck. At last he

turned into his master's house and saw their own dog sleeping peacefully on the ground. "So there you are! Trying to escape, were you, not any more, not you!" said Vinayak. Then he dragged the poor creature towards the garden, Damodar fairly shouted with rage when he saw his own pet and angrily enquired about the missing dog. Vinayak happily declared that this was indeed the 'dead dog!', somehow it had survived its fatal injury. Damodar, now beside himself with rage said, "You dumb clot, that is my dog, not a dead one. So go at once and find that other dog."

Vinayak retraced his steps



and went into the village. There he saw knots of people standing round the dead dog and discussing the mystery of its death. Fatty Vinayak shouted with joy when he saw the dead dog.

"So here you are! My master is waiting to bury you in the garden. Come along," he said, and began to lift it.

Then everyone crowded round asking questions and the whole story was out. So Damodar had to pay the owner of the dead animal for his loss. But he was so ashamed and angry at being found out, that he dismissed Vinayak from his service with these words. "Why, you wretch," Damodar

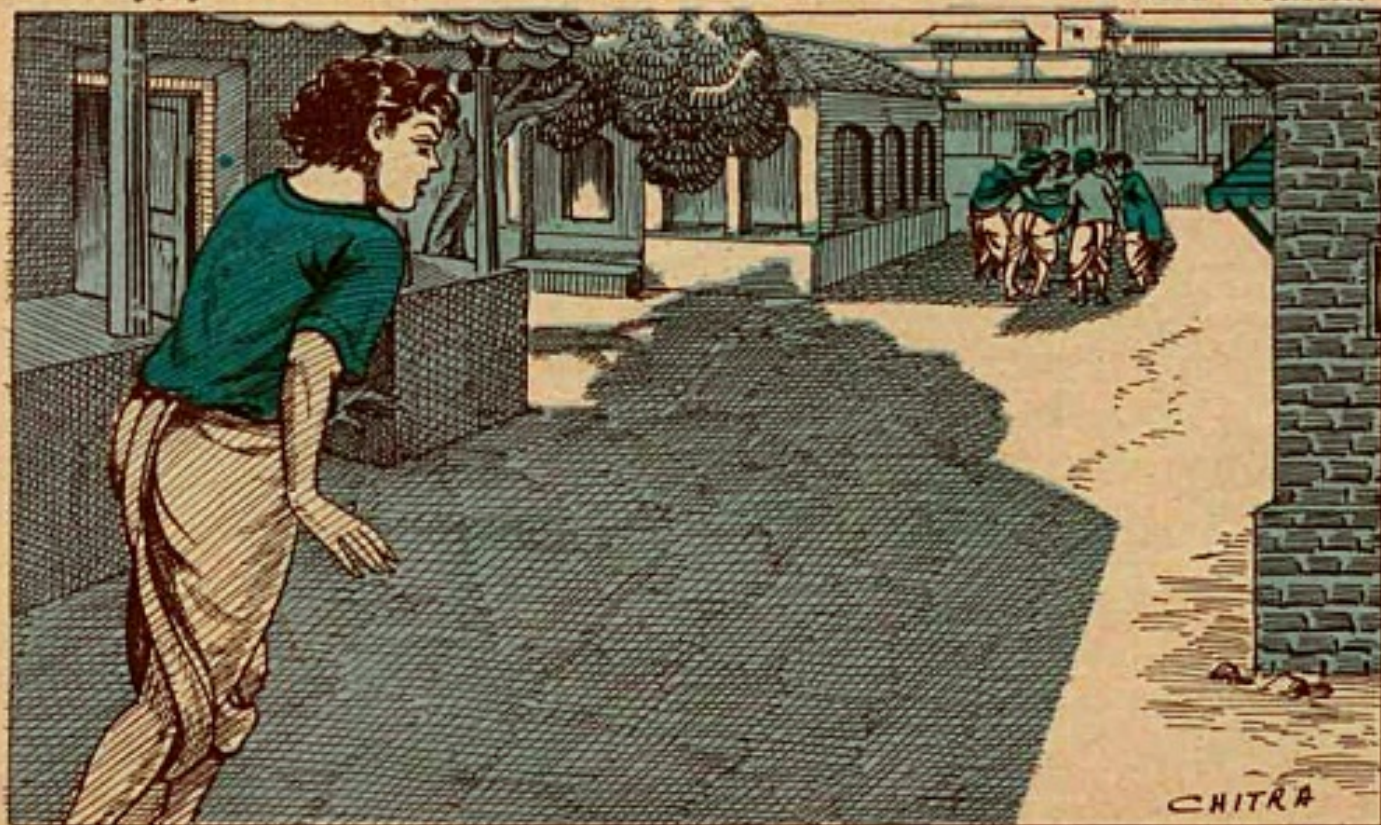
spluttered, "get away from my sight. I was a fool to employ you."

Vinayak replied, "But I can't leave. I must work for the ten rupees you have lost because of me. When I finish my work, I'll take the twenty five paise from, you, then I'll leave."

Damodar quickly dug into his pocket and taking out a twenty-five paise bit, gave it to Vinayak.

"Here is your money, you fat fool. Don't you dare show your face around my house again. You understand. Now be off."

Fatty Vinayak returned home richer in foolishness and wealth.





SEEMANTHINI

Long ago there was a king called Chitravarma. He had eight sons and a daughter. He was very fond of his daughter and christened her Seemanthini. She grew to be a beautiful woman.

When he showed her horoscope to the court astrologers, they proclaimed in ominous tones, "She'll become a widow soon after her wedding." The king became downcast at this prediction and kept the news from his daughter. But somehow she got wind of it. On the advice of her mother she fasted on Mondays and worshipped Lord Siva everyday of the week to ward off the evil in the prediction.

Some years later, the king celebrated her wedding with Chandrangada, Prince of Nishadapur. The king was so fond of his daughter that he persuaded the newly wedded couple to stay with him at the palace.

One day Chandrangada went out on a river picnic. When the boat reached mid-river, a strong gale arose and the frail craft capsized, drowning all miraculously, Chandrangada was rescued by some mermaids who took him to their underwater palace. Nagvarma, King of the under-sea kingdom received Chandrangada hospitably because the latter was the son-in-law of his friend, Chitravarma.

In the meanwhile Seemanthini grieved to hear of her husband's untimely end in the river. She gave up all joys in life and began to spend her time in prayer.

After sometime, Chandrangada wished to return to his land. At once Nagvarma, King of the Undersea Kingdom arranged a passage through the river for the safe return of the prince to the land of the mortals. Seemanthini was overjoyed to see her husband alive again and thought that her fasting and constant prayer to Lord Siva had yielded fruit.

Then Seemanthini went to Nishadapur with her husband. There also she did not forget

her daily ritual of prayer and fasting on auspicious days. On each Monday of the week, she invited married couples to the palace and gave them many gifts. Her fame as a virtuous woman spread far and wide.

In the land of Vidarbha, there were two young brahmins, Somavanth and Sumedh. As the custom in those far-off days, the two young men finished their period of bachelorhood and earned permission of their parents to enter the next stage of the householder. The parents were poor and therefore could not arrange for their marriage. You see, in those days men had to pay a dowry to the girl's



parents before the offer of marriage could be finalised, not as it is nowadays. So the parents sent their sons to the king to seek financial assistance in the matter.

The king heard their plaint and advised them to go to Seemanthini, at Nishadapur.

"But Sire," protested, Somavanth, "Seemanthini will give gifts only to those who are husband and wife. We are two bachelors and we'll never be admitted to her presence."

"Then," laughed the king, "go as husband and wife."

Now the king meant by this no more than a joke and he never for a moment believed

that the two young men would take him at his word.

But they took the king's words seriously. So Somavanth donned the garb of a lovely maiden and posing as husband and wife, they went to Nishadapur on a Monday, stood in the queue of such couples and took their gifts of money and clothes from Seemanthini herself. No one guessed that they were not husband and wife but two charlatans out to deceive the good and virtuous lady, Seemanthini.

Somavanth came home and took off his disguise, but discovered to his horror that he had indeed become a woman.



He ran to his parents and they too were dumbfounded at this transformation. Then they all went to the King of Vidarbha and lamented before him. "Oh! King, see what your words have caused. Now what is to happen to me," wailed Somavanth.

The king was struck by guilt that his innocent advice should have caused such a great havoc in the young man's life. So he retired from the court and spent his time meditating before Parvathi, the Divine Mother. She appeared to him in a vision and demanded to know what had happened. Then the king related the mishap caused by his words and requested her to change Somavanth back into a man.

Then Goddess Parvathi rep-

lied, "Oh, King, what you ask is clearly impossible. Seemanthini is a virtuous and chaste woman. When Somavanth and Sumedh appeared before her as husband and wife, she thought they were indeed what they claimed to be and accordingly gave them gifts. Her chaste thought thus made permanent what was a base deception on the part of the brash young men. This cannot be undone. So let them live happily as husband and wife."

Thus Somavanth became Somavathi and in due course married Sumedh. A chaste and virtuous wife can move even mountains and seas. Seemanthini with her devotion and steadfastness to her husband is the brightest example of chastity winning over all.

WHY IS THE LION CALLED KING OF THE BEASTS?

Perhaps because it does look 'kingly' with its magnificent mane, however, it is not always a courageous beast. Lions have been known to run away from a giraffe or a zebra when they fight back. The King of Beasts, so-called, is not the largest of the cat family—this description belongs to the tiger. Lions live as a family group called a *pride*. They hunt at dusk and dawn and work as a 'team' in order to make a kill.

THE SPEAKING GRAPES

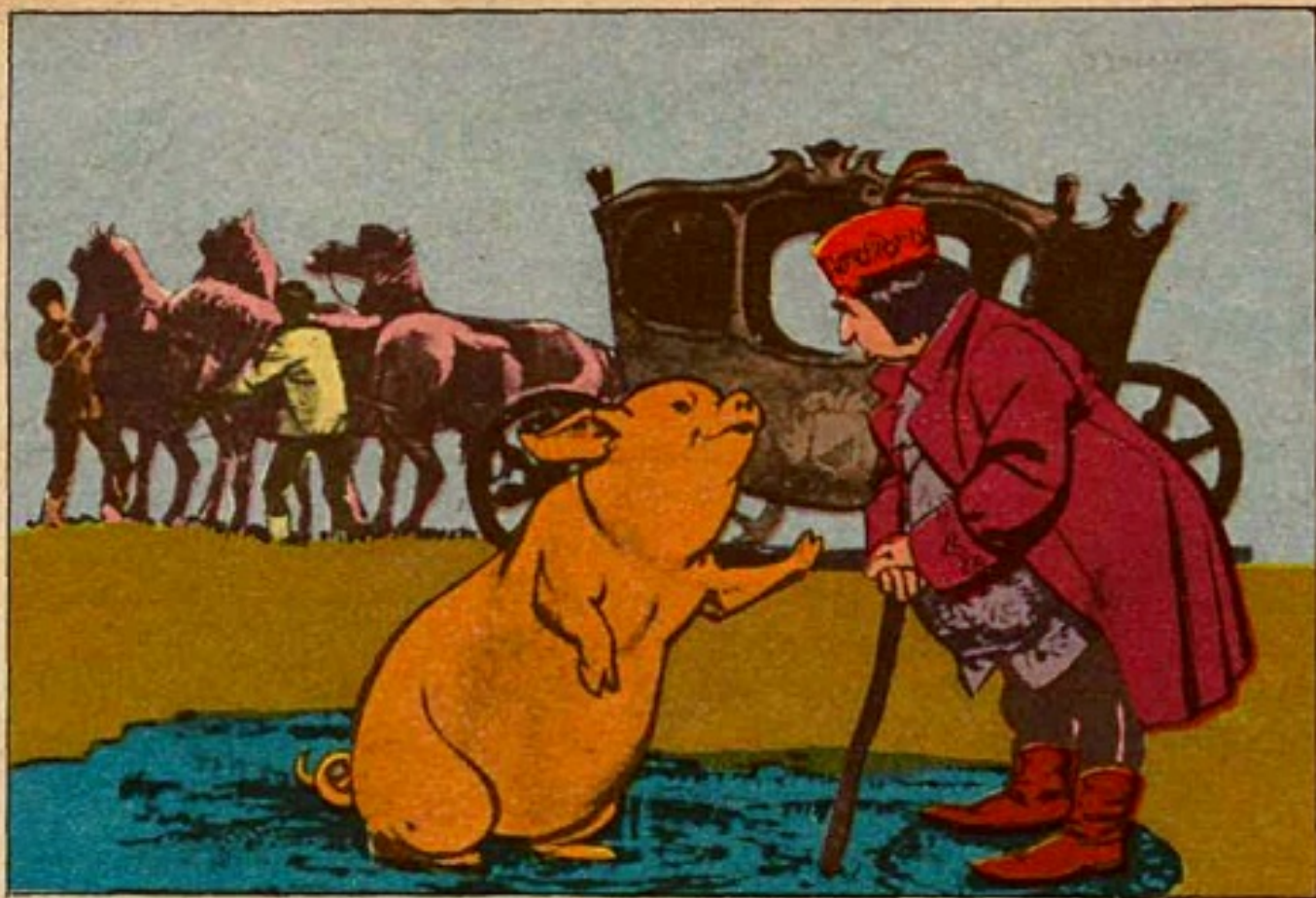
This is a fairy story from Hungary. It is a great favourite with the children of that country and its full title is: "The speaking grapes, the smiling apple and the tinkling apricot."

Once upon a time there was a king, who had three lovely daughters. They were very fond of him, because he was always so kind and thoughtful.

It gave him the greatest pleasure to see that they were happy



The king asked them what they would like him to bring them back from the market.



and when he planned a trip to the big market in a nearby town, he asked them what they would like him to bring back for them.

"Best of all, I would like a new golden dress, father," said the eldest of the daughters.

"I would like a new silver dress, please, father," said the second eldest daughter.

"Very well," agreed the king. Then he turned to the youngest of his daughters. "What would you like me to bring back for you?" he asked her.

"Well, father," she said, "the things I would like most of all are some speaking grapes, a

smiling apple and a tinkling apricot."

Off went the king in the royal coach and at the market he quickly bought the dresses of gold and silver, but search as he might, he could not find any speaking grapes, a smiling apple or a tinkling apricot. This made him very sad, because his youngest daughter was his favourite.

"Perhaps she knows where I can get them for her," he thought. "I will willingly make another journey tomorrow."

On the way back to the palace, the royal coach became stuck fast in some thick mud and although the horses were

the best in the whole kingdom, they had not the strength to pull it out. More horses were sent to help, but no amount of pulling would free the coach from the mud. The king was in despair, when a pig arrived on the scene.

"Your Majesty, let me marry your youngest daughter and I will pull your coach out of the mud," grunted the pig.

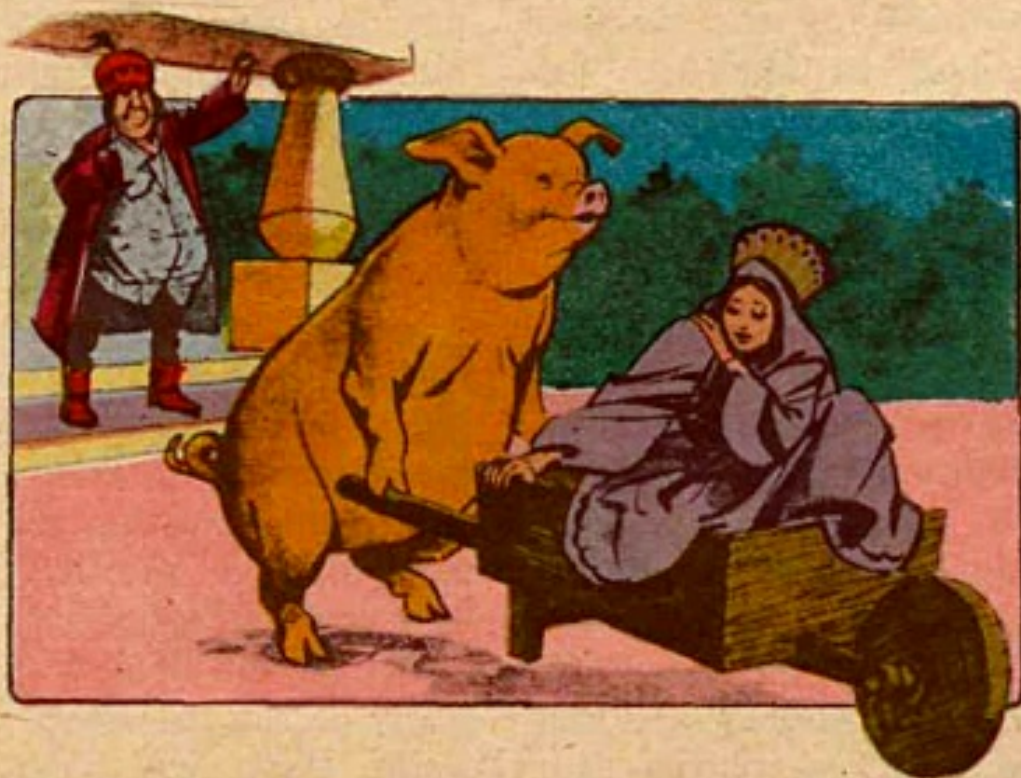
The king was willing to try anything to get out of such a fix and, without thinking of what he was promising, he agreed.

Whereupon, with one push of his nose, the pig moved the coach and all the horses out of the mud.

Off to the palace went the king, now very worried about his promise. He really did not want his prettiest and youngest daughter married to a pig, so he arranged to have a poor country girl dressed in a beautiful white gown. When the pig arrived, pulling a wheelbarrow behind him, the king seated the country girl in it.

The pig looked at the girl, then at the king. "Your majesty, you are cheating me", he grunted angrily. "This is not your daughter." So saying, he tipped her out of the wheelbarrow.

Seeing that cheating was of no use, the king brought out his youngest daughter, dressed





in rags, hoping that she would not please the pig, but the pig grunted with joy, picked up the girl and placed her in the wheelbarrow. As pig and wheelbarrow went away, the king wept to think of the terrible fate he had brought to his daughter.

After a long journey, the wheel barrow stopped in front of a dirty pig-sty. "Get out of the wheel barrow, girl," the pig grunted.

She did as she was told with tears streaming down her face. "Grumph, grumph!" grunted the pig again. "Go into your new home."

With a little shudder the young princess crawled into the sty. The floor was none too

clean and in one corner was a heap of straw. "There is your bed for the night, my dear," said the pig. "If you are hungry, you may eat some of my food. For supper this evening I am having ears of corn, cabbage leaves and potato peelings. You will find them very tasty."

"No, thank you," sobbed the girl. "I do not feel very hungry at the moment."

"Then make yourself comfortable and sleep," grunted the pig. "You will feel better in the morning." With that, he went out, closing the pig-sty door behind him. Tired and unhappy, the poor princess lay down on the bed of straw and cried herself to sleep.

She slept very soundly, not

waking until the next day at noon. When she opened her eyes, she was amazed to find herself in a wonderful bedroom in a fairy palace. The bed she was in was of white silk, with rich purple curtains with golden fringes. As she woke, maids appeared carrying beautiful dresses. Wondering if this was all part of a dream, she chose one of the dresses. When she had put it on, the maids took her to breakfast in a large hall, where a handsome young man was waiting for her.

"I am your husband," he smiled, "and everything here belongs to you."

"How can that be?" gasped the princess. "All I have in this world are a pig for a husband and part of a pig-sty to sleep in"

"I will tell you all about it later," promised the young man. "First you must eat."

After breakfast, he took her into a wonderful garden. She still did not know whether or not this was a dream, but if it were, she did not want to wake up. When the young man spoke to her she answered lightly and jokingly, perhaps hoping to forget the awful truth that she had just been married to a pig.





After a while they came to an orchard. As they went into it, past a huge vine-bush, the bunches of grapes hanging on the branches began to speak.

"Our beautiful queen," they said, "please pluck some of us."

While she stood in amazement, apples on a nearby tree smiled down at her. A little farther on, golden apricots tinkled a pretty tune on the branches of another tree.

"You see, my dear," explained the young man, "here you have what you wished for—and what your father could not find.

I was once a young king, but I was bewitched into a pig and I had to remain so until a girl wished for speaking grapes, a smiling apple and a tinkling apricot. You have rescued me from being a pig by breaking the wicked magic spell and now I am able to ask you if you will take me as your husband."

The princess was enchanted. She knew then that it was no dream. Instead of a wheelbarrow, she made the journey back to the palace in a glittering coach, joyfully to carry the news to her father and to tell him of their great happiness.



THE THIEF

Long ago in the city of Brindavan, there lived a thief called Mathura. He was proud of his profession because his ancestors had excelled in it. But he was sad because he had no son to carry on the traditional life. After some time, he adopted his nephew Krishna who was a bright lad and proved an adept pupil of his uncle.

Daily the two of them went on their thieving rounds and achieved considerable success in their efforts. One day, they decided to rob the house of the local mayor who was the richest person in the city.

Now this mayor and his wife were great devotees of Lord Krishna, the chief diety of

Brindavan. They prayed every-day as they were a childless couple and believed that their devotion to God would bless them with a son.

On the night that Mathura and Krishna had selected to rob his house the mayor had gone out to discuss with the village elders matters of importance. Obviously, he would return home late in the night and this suited the two thieves very well. They hid in the backyard of his house and bided their time.

But Krishna felt very hungry and informed his uncle that he would steal only if he had a morsel of food. So Mathura said, "Right you are. Go into the pantry and grab what food you can. I'll go upstairs and



take what jewels there are. Then we shall meet at the base of the tamarind tree.”

Accordingly, Krishna stole into the house noiselessly and made a bee line for the pantry. There he saw round sweet cakes and a jar full of milk which the mayor's wife had prepared for her husband. The little lad fell upon the food like a famished wolf and in no time had polished off every crumb. In the next room, the mayor's wife snored on noisily unaware

of what was taking place in the pantry.

As Krishna licked his fingers and smacked his lips after drinking the jar full of milk, there was a loud knocking on the door. The mayor had returned! Quickly, Krishna wiped his fingers and sought about for means of escape. But there was none and so hurriedly he clambered up the loft in the pantry and hid himself.

The mayor entered and told his wife he was ravenously hungry. So she went into the pantry and the next moment an anguished shriek rent the air. The mayor dashed into the pantry and saw his wife standing in the middle of the room and wringing her hands in despair.

As soon as she saw him, she said, “All the sweet cakes that I had prepared for you are missing. Even the milk I kept for you is gone. Oh! What shall I do?”

The mayor rebuked her angrily and said, “That's a tall story alright. You were hungry and so you ate up all the food.”

His wife protested and said between tears, “Please don't blame me like that. I swear to

you that I would never do a thing like that. You know I always eat after you've finished. To-day, I must have slept more than the usual, and perhaps our Lord Krishna came and ate up everything." The husband pooh-poohed such nonsense and declared it was a load of rubbish to suggest that the God of Brindavan had come to their dwelling and feasted himself upon the sweet cakes. Clearly, his wife was lying she had gobbled up everything and he knew how to treat such liars. So he took up a thick cudgel and prepared to belabour her with it.

Krishna in the loft could not bear to see a good woman treated thus and so he jumped in front of the quarrelling couple. "Look here, man," he said "Why do you beat your wife? It was I who polished off your cakes and jar of milk. Drop your stick." Then he ran off as fast as he could.

The mayor was so startled at this sudden apparition that he shook like a man stricken

by ague. In the meanwhile, Mathura who was tired of waiting for Krishna called out, loudly, Hey, Krishna, boy, here, Krishna. At the same time, Krishna shouting out loudly that he was coming dashed out through the open door. Then the two of them vanished into the darkness.

The mayor's wife recovered her wits first and shouted at her husband, "Why do you stand and gape so? Can't you see we've had a thief here. Go and catch him." The mayor shook his head, and swinging his cudgel ran out into the street, shouting, "thief, thief." But Mathura and Krishna were far from the scene of their crime. When Krishna recited the incident of the sweet cakes, Mathura laughed long and loud and said his nephew was a clever scoundrel indeed.

As for the mayor he returned home an angry man and his wife had to cook a meal for him all over again, because Krishna had eaten up all the food.

■ WHEN A WELL-LIQUORED gentleman returned home late one night and tried to unlock his front door, his wife shouted from an upstairs window.

"Is that you, Fred?"

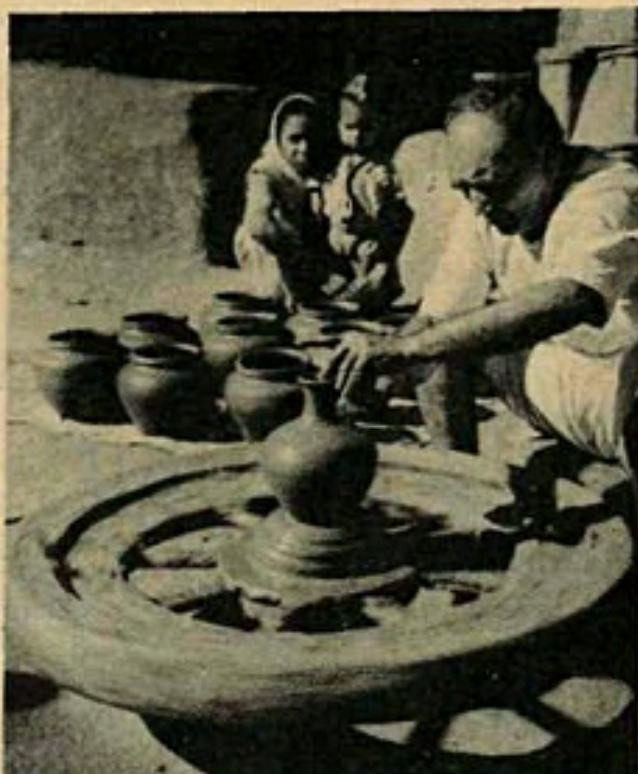
"Yes," he replied shakily. "I can't get the door open."

"Do you want me to throw down a key?" she asked.

"No," the lush replied, "but could you throw me down a keyhole?"

PHOTO CAPTION CONTEST

Here is your opportunity to win a cash prize!
Winning captions will be announced in the March issue



- ★ These two photographs are somewhat related. Can you think of suitable captions? Could be single words, or several words, but the two captions must be related to each other.
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- ★ Your entry should be written on a postcard, giving your full name and address, together with age and sent to:

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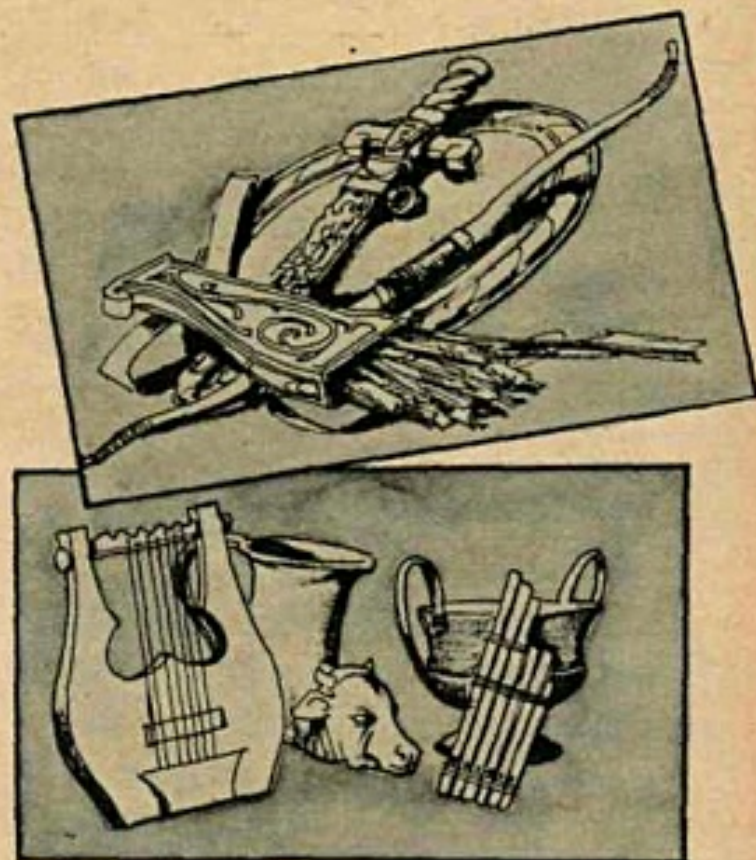
ULYSSES GOES TO WAR

Long, long ago, the island of Ithaca, off the West coast of Greece, was ruled by a king called Ulysses.

Ithaca was a very pleasant island for the Summers were long and warm and during the Winter there were only a few cold weeks. Wild flowers, violets, roses, lilies and many others, bloomed in the fields and meadows, while flocks of sheep and herds of goats and wild deer roamed the hill-sides. Fruit grew on almost every tree and vine and the sea around the island was full of fish.

Ulysses, whose wife was called Penelope, had one son whose name was Telemachus, but he was only a baby when war suddenly came to Greece.

Far across the sea lay the city of Troy, which was ruled by a rich king called Priam. His youngest son, Paris, had



been to visit Menelaus, one of the Greek kings, and while he was staying at the palace Paris had fallen in love with the wife of king Menelaus. Her name was Helen and she was the most beautiful woman in the world. Paris loved her so dearly that he could not bear to sail away without her, so when he

returned home he took her with him.

The news that Helen had been carried off to Troy by Paris soon spread to all the other Greek kings and princes and it was taken by them as a great personal insult to King Menelaus.

King Agamemnon, whom they looked upon as their leader, ordered all the kings and princes of Greece and the islands around to gather all their ships and soldiers together and to prepare for war against Troy.

On the island of Ithaca, Ulysses, who had heard about the war with Troy, did not want to leave his beloved island and his beautiful wife and little son so when two princes came to Ithaca to ask Ulysses to join them in the war he decided to trick them by pretending he was mad.

When the princes reached the palace of Ithaca, a servant told them that Ulysses had gone down to the beach with a plough, two oxen and a bag of salt. Wondering what the king was doing, the princes went down to the sea shore to see for themselves and there they found Ulysses, ploughing

the sand and sowing grains of salt in it, just as if he were ploughing and sowing a field with corn.

Although it seemed as though the king had lost his wits, the two princes could not be sure. They knew that Ulysses was a clever and cunning man, so they decided to test him.

They went back to the palace and fetched his baby son. Then they laid the child on the sand, right in the path that Ulysses would take as he ploughed the next furrow.

When Ulysses turned his plough, he saw his son lying on the sand before him and he knew that if he continued, the oxen would kill the boy.

Just as he reached his son, he turned the oxen and the plough aside and the two princes knew for certain that Ulysses was only pretending to be mad. They told him that however much he disliked the idea of leaving Ithaca and his family behind, he must obey the orders of King Agamemnon, lord of all the kings and princes of Greece, and come and fight in the war.

Ulysses knew he could not disobey King Agamemnon, so he gathered together twelve

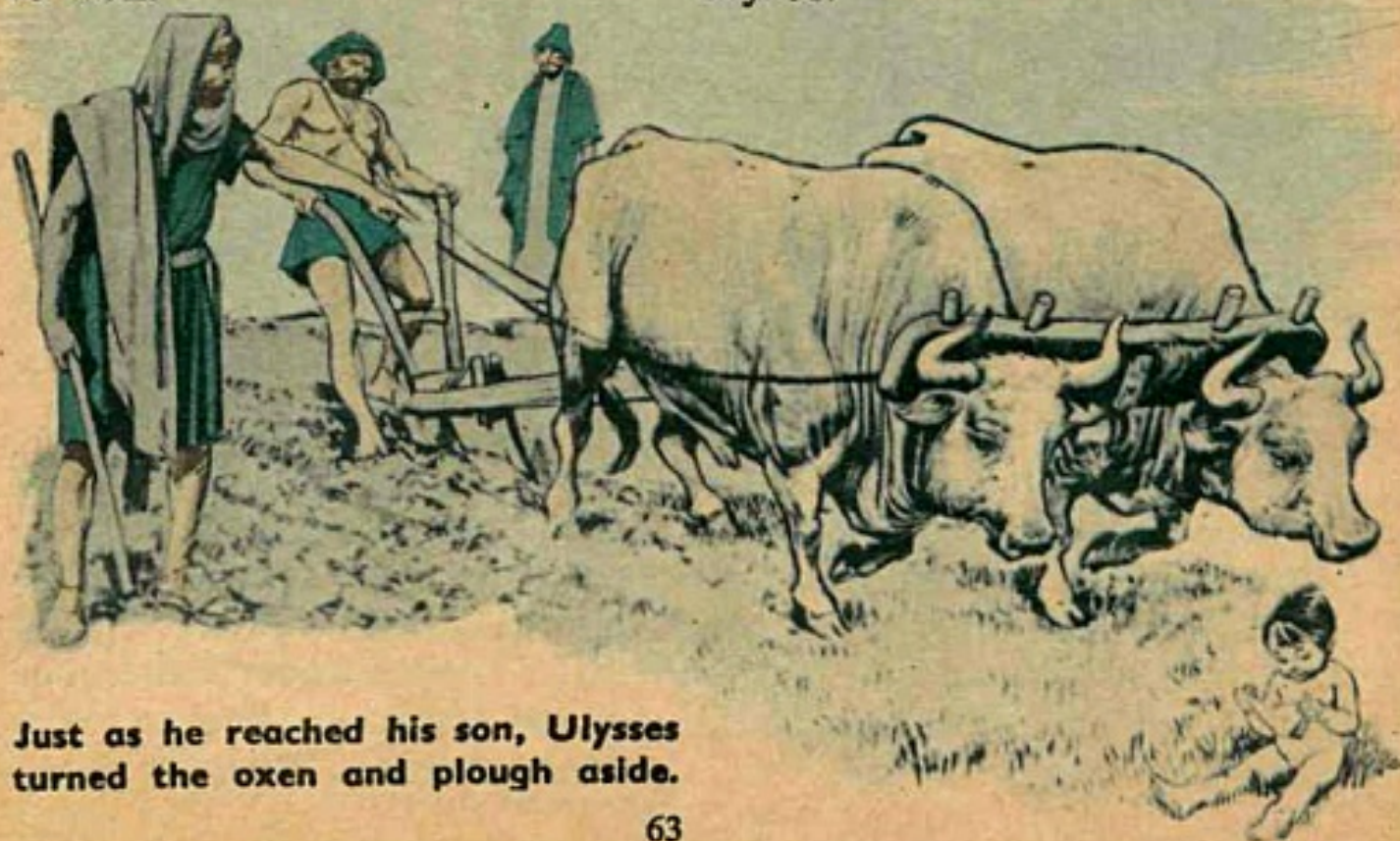
black ships, their bows and sterns painted red and summoned his soldiers. Each soldier manned an oar and after saying a sad farewell to his wife and son, the King of Ithaca boarded his boat and the fleet rowed away. They soon met up with the others and now the Greek fleet numbered over a thousand ships and many thousands of soldiers.

Although the fleet was so large the Greek leaders knew that they could not take the city of Troy without the help of another prince, named Achilles, for it had been prophesied that without Achilles, the war against Troy would never be won.

Achilles was the son of a king called Peleus and at his birth his mother, who was the goddess of the sea, had been told that her son would be a brave and mighty warrior, but he would die in battle when he was quite young.

His mother who did not want her son to die young, sent Achilles far away, to the island of Scyros, where, dressed as a girl he lived with the King of Scyros's daughters.

The Greek leaders who were certain, because of the prophecy, that they could never take Troy without the help of Achilles, altered course for the island of Scyros.



Just as he reached his son, Ulysses turned the oxen and plough aside.

**Achilles drew the sword
from its sheath.**



Once there, the King of Scyros invited the leaders of the Greek fleet to his palace, but although Ulysses looked everywhere for Achilles, he did not find him so he thought up a plan that would reveal the boy.

Ulysses dressed as a pedlar and pretended he had just arrived from a far country. When the king's daughters heard that a foreign trader had landed on the island they flocked to see what exciting things he had

brought with him, for them to buy. One of the girls chose a gold brooch, another bought a pair of glittering glass earrings and a third bought a roll of cloth to make a dress.

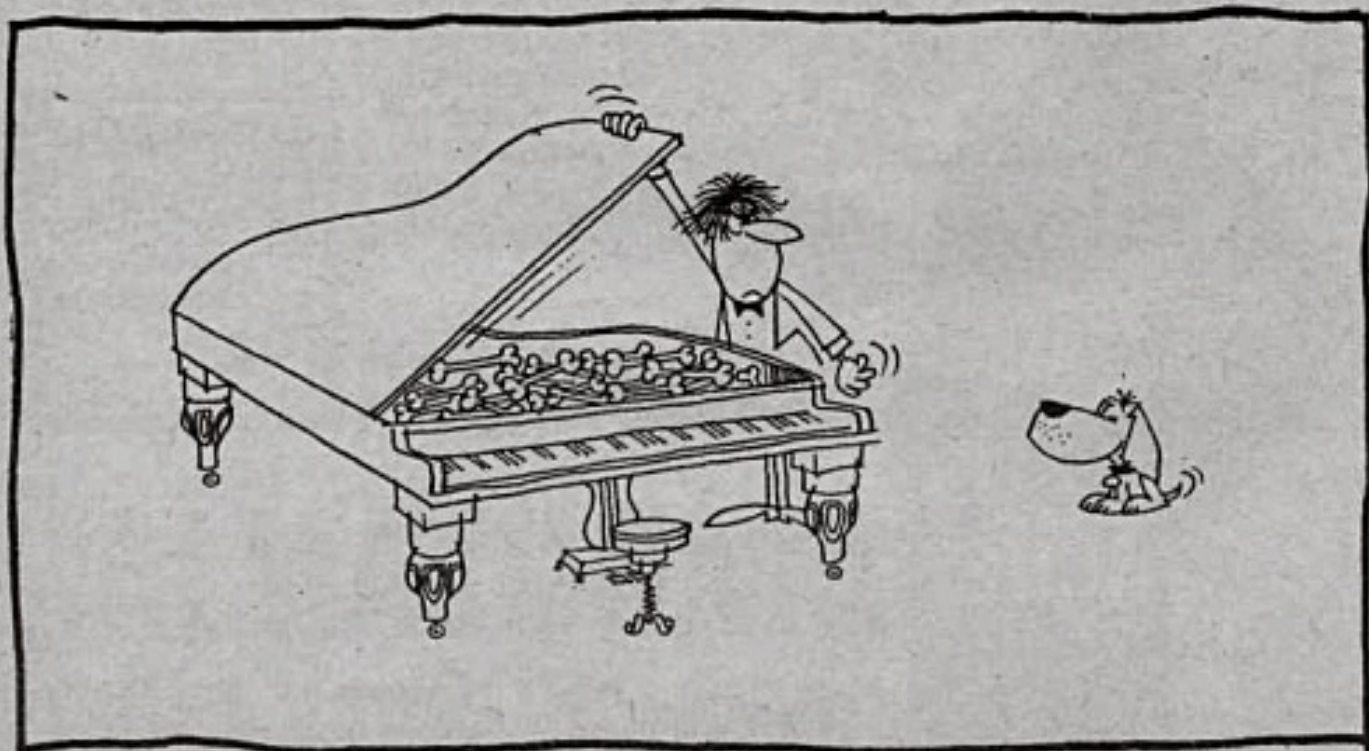
Right at the bottom of the pedlar's pack Ulysses had placed a fine bronze sword with a golden hilt. When Achilles, disguised as a girl, saw this, he reached down and drawing the sword from its sheath he whirled it round his head. "Ah! At last," cried Ulysses. "Now I know who you are. You are Achilles, the son of King Peleus. Come with us and you will become the greatest of all Greek warriors."

Achilles' mother wept when her son returned and she heard

that he was preparing for battle. "Stay here with me," she said, "and you will have a long and peaceful life. If you go to war you will gain great fame as a warrior, but you will die young".

Achilles, however, had to become a warrior, so his father, who was too old to go to war himself, gave him fifty ships and his mother, realising that she could not persuade him to stay, gave him a suit of wonderful armour and a heavy spear that only Achilles himself could lift.

Then, with his fleet of ships and his soldiers, the young man sailed to meet the rest of the Greek fleet, the proudest and fiercest soldier of all.





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